

ONLY  
BUS

# SHARED TRANSIT LANES

Under certain circumstances, a shared lane reserved for transit vehicles and bicyclists can provide improved accommodation for both traveler groups. Shared transit lanes are specifically designed to provide room for the two users to maneuver together as transit vehicles start and stop along a corridor. Shared lanes are commonly also used to accommodate right turning vehicles.

## USE

- Shared transit lanes are appropriate on streets where space constraints preclude the opportunity to provide separate facilities and where bus headways and speeds are moderate (greater than five minute headways). Shared transit lanes typically require less total right-of-way space than separate facilities for each user.
- Shared transit lanes should not be considered on high frequency transit corridors or on corridors where bicycle

volumes are high enough to adversely affect transit operations. In such instances, prioritization of one mode or separate facilities may be necessary.

- Shared bicycle/transit lanes typically are not physically separated from adjacent travel lanes.
- Shared facilities will also generally be comfortable to more experienced bicyclists, so shared transit lanes are typically not an appropriate treatment for community bicycle emphasis corridors.


## DESIGN

- Shared transit lanes should be located in the outermost lane, ideally adjacent to the curb. They may be located adjacent to curbside parking; however, this introduces substantial conflict and degrades operations and safety in the priority lane.
- Shared bicycle/transit lanes should have sufficient width for dual bicycle/transit use. Eleven feet is the minimum adequate dimension.
- Appropriate markings and signage must be provided to ensure all users of the street are aware of the modes that should be using the shared lane.
- Transit/bicycle lanes ideally should be for the exclusive use of these two modes, except at intersections where vehicles may use them as turning lanes.

## SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- Bicycle volumes, transit frequency, available right-of-way, total cross section, frequency of transits stops, and time restricted changes in street operation should be considered in determining the appropriateness of a shared bicycle/transit lane.
- Shared transit lanes are not appropriate on rush hour restricted streets (streets where the curb parking lane converts to a travel lane during peak hours).
- Transit operators should be trained in how to interact with bicyclists in shared bicycle/transit lane facilities. Outreach and education to community members and bicyclists will also help with understanding how to use shared bicycle/transit lanes.
- Typically, shared bicycle/transit lanes should not be used on any street with a posted speed limit above 30 mph.
- Vehicles using shared bicycle/transit lanes for through travel can be a major issue. This not only degrades performance, but introduces serious safety concerns. Education and enforcement is always a necessary component when using shared bicycle/transit lanes.

- Shared bicycle/transit lanes may be less inviting or comfortable for less experienced bicyclists.
- The larger width of shared transit lanes increases the overall width of the street and associated pedestrian crossings, so pedestrian crossing islands may be necessary. It may also work against the objectives of self-enforcing streets as wider travel ways tend to encourage higher vehicle travel speeds.

 Transit lanes may offer an opportunity for porous concrete or asphalt treatments. Where space allows, use rain gardens, bioswales and raised planters in the buffer.

## OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE

- Shared bicycle/transit lanes generally require a higher level of observation and enforcement than general purpose travel lanes.
- Shared bicycle/transit should be kept clear of snow and debris.
- Shared bicycle/transit lane striping and the associated symbols and signs are additional markings and signs that will require maintenance and replacement.

## REFERENCES

- NACTO: Urban Street Design Guide, 2013
  - Street Design Elements: Transit Streets <http://nacto.org/publication/urban-street-design-guide/street-design-elements/transit-streets/>

